

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-10 OMB-01 AID-05 A-01

OPR-02 SY-05 OC-05 CCO-00 SCCT-01 USSS-00 SCS-03

SCA-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EURE-00 /099 W

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P R 161700Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3444

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4020

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DELVELOPMENTS

REF: (A) LISBON 3935; (B) LISBON 3999

SUMMARY: TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH DESPITE NON-CONFRONTATION POSTURE
ADOPTED BY SOCIALISTS. MODERATES WITHIN REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC)
ARE EXPECTED TO MAKE EFFORT TO OUST PRIME MINISTER IN RC
MEETING NOW IN SESSION. SOARES TOLD LARGE PS RALLY EVENING
JULY 15 TO REMAIN VIGILANT. PS PLANS SERIES OF RALLIES
DURING REST OF WEEK WITH ANOTHER RALLY IN LISBON JULY 19. SOARES
AGAIN REFERRED TO POSSIBILITY OF "SYMBOLIC STOPPAGE" SOMETIME IN
FUTURE. COPCON HAS ADOPTED BALANCED STATEMENT ON BURNING OF PCP
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AND FSP OFFICES IN RIO MAIOR. FIFTH DIVISION ISSUED DEFENSIVE

COMMUNIQUE DEFENDING PLAN FOR DIRECT AFM LINKS WITH PEOPLE. GOP IS REPORTEDLY READYING THREE BATTALIONS FOR MOVEMENT TO ANGOLA. END SUMMARY

1. ATTEMPT TO OUST PRIME MINISTER: DUTCH AMBASSADOR SAID THAT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (RC) MEMBER VICTOR ALVES TOLD HIM THAT AT THE REGULAR JULY 16 MEETING OF THE RC, THE MODERATES WOULD ATTEMPT AGAIN TO OUST VASCO GONCALVES. REFTEL (A) REPORTED THAT ATTEMPT AT LAST MEETING FAILED WHEN PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES REFUSED TO BRING THE ISSUE TO A VOTE. ALVES SAID THAT THERE ARE 16 VOTES (NOT INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT) ON THE SIDE OF THE MODERATES, THUS ENSURING A MAJORITY AGAINST THE PRIME MINISTER. IF MODERATES FAIL, ALVES SAYS THEY WILL WALK OUT.

2. SOCIALIST RALLY: JULY 15 PS RALLY WAS ORDERLY WITH ABOUT 20,000 PARTICIPANTS. ALTHOUGH CROWD CALLED FOR A MARCH ON "REPUBLICA" OFFICES, SOARES DISSUADED THEM, SAYING THAT PARTY WAS NOT A VIOLENT ORGANIZATION. SOARES HAS CALLED FOR A SERIES OF RALLIES AROUND THE COUNTRY DURING REST OF WEEK, WITH ANOTHER RALLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 19 IN LISBON. SOARES AGAIN REFERRED TO POSSIBILITY OF "SYMBOLIC STOPPAGE" SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE.

3. RIO MAIOR: BURNING OF FSP AND COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICES IN RIO MAIOR HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH FOCUSED COUNTRY'S ATTENTION ON THAT SMALL TOWN (REF B). JULY 15 COMMUNIQUE FROM COPCON TAKES AN UNUSUALLY NEUTRAL STANCE ON EVENTS, BLAMING THE COMMUNISTS FOR THEIR ATTEMPT TO HOLD A MEETING OF LOCA FARMERS' ORGANIZATION WITHOUT INFORMING ANYBODY ELSE AND CRITICIZING RADIO BROADCASTS OF FSP AND PCP STATEMENTS AS HAVING JUSTIFIABLY EXCITED LOCAL POPULATION. PS RALLY FEATURED A SPEAKER FROM RIO MAIOR, WHO CRITICIZED LISBON PRESS'S HANDLING OF EVENTS.

4. FIFTH DIVISION STATEMENT: THE ARMED FORCES FIFTH DIVISION (PROPAGANDA AND CULTURAL DYNAMIZATION) ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE FURTHER EXPLAINING THE "GUIDE DOCUMENT" ON POPULAR ASSEMBLIES ISSUED BY THE ARMED FORCES ASSEMBLY LAST WEEK. COMMUNIQUE NOTES THAT (A) PRACTICAL EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN IS ONLY TO CONFIDENTIAL

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RECOGNIZE ORGANIZATIONS -- NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS AND WORKERS' COMMISSIONS -- WHICH ALREADY EXIST; (B) IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS WILL BE GRADUAL; (C) PARTIES STILL HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE AS DOES CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY; AND (D) GUIDE DOCUMENT IS NOT DEFINITIVE AND STILL SUBJECT TO DISCUSSION.

5. TROOPS TO ANGOLA: WE UNDERSTAND FROM USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE THAT GOP INTENDS TO SEND THREE BATTALIONS TO ANGOLA.

IT IS LIKELY THAT ONE OF UNITS WILL BE FROM THE PENAFIEL GARRISON NEAR OPORTO, WHICH HAS BEEN ON ALERT FOR SUCH A MOVEMENT.

6. COMMENT: THE SOCIALISTS HAVE OPTED, AT LEAST IN SHORT RUN, FOR POLICY OF NON-CONFRONTATION WITH THE MILITARY. THE PS HAS EXCELLENT SOURCES IN THE RC AND THEY GENERALLY HAVE DETAILED INFORMATION ON WHAT THE RC IS DOING. THEY ARE CERTAINLY AWARE OF THE MODERATES' MOVE AGAINST GONCALVES AND MAY NOT WISH TO DO ANYTHING DRAMATIC UNTIL THE RC MODERATES HAVE HAD THEIR CHANCE. THEY MAY ALSO BE WAITING FOR FORMAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF PPD WITHDRAWAL FROM GOVERNMENT, WHICH MAY COME LATE TODAY (JULY 16).

7. DEFENSIVE NATURE OF 5TH DIVISION COMMUNIQUE ON POPULAR ASSEMBLIES HAS BEEN ECHOED ALMOST WORD FOR WORD BY AFM MEMBERS IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH EMBOFFS, SUGGESTING THAT AFM REALLY WAS TAKEN BACK BY STORMY RESPONSE BY PARTIES AND INTERNATIONAL PRESS TO THE POPULAR ASSEMBLIES PROPOSAL. RESTRAINED MILITARY RESPONSE TO RIO MAIOR AFFAIR AND COPCON'S "BALANCED" COMMUNIQUE INDICATE LEVEL OF CONCERN IN AFM OVER THE POTENTIAL OPPOSITION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. RIO MAIOR AREA WAS STRONGLY ANTI-GOVERNMENT IN SALAZAR DAYS AND CANNOT BE WRITTEN OFF AS REACTIONARY STRONGHOLD IN THE SAME FASHION THAT THE AFM CHARACTERIZES THE "UNENLIGHTENED" CONSERVATIVE NORTHERN AREAS. NEED TO SEND TROOPS TO ANGOLA WILL CREATE VERY DELICATE PROBLEMS FOR GOP WITH VERY REAL POSSIBILITY THAT TROOPS MAY RESIST GOING.
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